The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

An event of more than local interest has recently been engaging the earnest attention of the members of our Holywood Congregation. That was the story of the latter's origin in far-off times. A period of three hundred years is no unimportant one in the life of any community, but we consider it of exceeding great importance in the case of a religious community, and notably so when such a community is not slavishly bound to the past, but carries within itself the principle of progress. Then the story of the past is vitally connected with the life of the present. Great as are the changes which such a period of time reveals, all have their explanation in that fundamental principle of liberty which our fathers cherished, and in turn transmitted to those who were to be their spiritual successors. We understand that the present minister of the Holywood Congregation has embraced the opportunity of unfolding the life of the past and of dwelling upon some outstanding features in its long and illustrious career. The value of such historic survey could hardly be over-estimated, and is deserving of emulation. We all need to be reminded of what a priceless debt we owe to the men of old time—to those who laboured so faithfully and so effectually that we might be free. We, therefore, rejoice in the recalling of the happy and holy incidents of the historic past, and would at the same time wish for the Holywood Congregation many more years of useful and successful labour.

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Since our last series of names was added to the Roll of Honour made up of the members of our Non-Subscribing Congregations who have joined the forces there has been a further accession of members as yet unpublished in this Magazine. We propose, therefore, to bring our list up to date early in the New Year, and would earnestly beg of our correspondents in the different congregations to let us have all needful particulars in due time. In this connection it is of interest to note that in England steps are to be taken to get into touch with the many members of our congregations who are in the various training camps. Our contemporary, "The Christian Life," recently published a letter from the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, the purport of which is the

desirability of ascertaining the full names and military addresses of soldiers known to be in such military camps. Such information will permit of proper steps being taken, for Dr. Hargrove and other ministers have already promised to conduct such religious services as may be arranged.

* *

It is sad to contemplate a second Xmas season overshadowed by the terrible fact of war. Yet unable as so many of us are to give effect to the message of peace and good-will to men, there is none the less reason why we should be deaf to its appeal. It is unfortunately not the first time that human ill-will has seemed to mar the divine harmony which Jesus came to foster. Yet throughout the ages men have refused to believe that the seen was greater than the unseen, the good more potent than the evil. In one of the most beautiful of the Christmas hymns the writer has brought together the two strains, so unlike in character, so apparently incompatible in spirit and tendency—

> Yet with the woes of sin and strife
> The world has suffered long :
> Beneath the angels' strain have rolled
> Two thousand years of wrong.
> And man, at war with man, hears not
> The love song which they bring :
> O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
> And hear the angels sing.

A year ago correspondents at the front informed us that the sentiment expressed in the last two lines did actually awaken a response—that German and British soldiers established a truce on Christmas Day and exchanged sentiments of cordial good-will. That, even under such conditions and in the very midst of cruel warfare, the Christmas message could win a hearing should make us still hope and believe that ultimately the song of the angels will resound with no discordant accompaniments of human passion and opposition. May even now such message come to all our readers to give comfort to saddened hearts and to touch with hope minds oppressed by thought of war.

With this number the Magazine completes another year of issue, and it may not be inappropriate if an appeal from the Business Manager were allowed.

In the first place, thanks are due to the ladies and gentlemen in the several congregations, in some cases the ministers themselves, who undertake the duty of distribution. The task is not a congenial one, but it could be made an easier one if the members of our Churches would co-operate with them in ordering the Magazine and paying for same at the beginning of the year. It has often occurred that the distributor has had to make up a deficit at settling time, and this is a hardship which ought not to be allowed in any congregation.

The Magazine has been established now for eight and a half years, and the promoters have maintained it simply through the generosity of a few people who have taken a practical interest in regard to it. A loss of nearly £20 has to be made up every year, and this could be considerably lessened if every family in our several congregations would subscribe. This is the only paper issued by our denomination in Ireland, and, whilst acknowledgment is made to the "Christian Life" and Inquirer, it is surely not too much to ask our friends to lend a hand in supporting a magazine which aims at supplying the news of our group of Churches constituting the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

We have good reason to believe that the Magazine is a most useful agent in disseminating the news of our Churches and supplying articles of interest to all the members of the same, and so we appeal for more subscribers to help in rendering the paper self-supporting.

* *

The Christmas which is fast approaching will not be a very happy one in many homes. It would be a pity, however, if the Christmas spirit were entirely forgotten, even in these trying times ; and, although we are urged on all hands to exercise economy, it would hardly be fair to allow the little children to go without presents. There is a large

number of new books suitable for gifts at the Depository, where calendars and Christmas cards may also be bought, and we would ask our friends not to forget the shop in Rosemary Street when they do such shopping as they think necessary this year.

ADVENT. 1915.

By Rev. Eustace Thompson.

"He shall teach peace unto the nations."
Zech. ix. 10.

Once more "the time draws near the birth of Christ." For the second time during this stupendous twentieth-century war, in which by now eleven European nations, ten of them nations that have been taught of Christ, are fighting prodigiously for liberty to live their national independent life. For, whatever they set out to win, that is what the Germans are fighting for by this time, quite as clearly as is Belgium or Serbia, or any of the rest. The difference is in this: that the Germans are fighting for their liberty as pirates or freebooters or any other violent criminals would fight for theirs: and just as desperately as any band of brigands would do, when they saw as these are seeing now, that they are likely very soon to be overpowered by the forces of law and order and justice sent against them by the states they have so infamously outraged. The same description may be applied to the case of their Allies, if you will; but the Germans are the people who have most plainly betrayed that it was in the spirit of bravoes that they rushed to their weapons at the beginning, and they have waged the war ever since with the frightful cruelty and the total lack of honour in keeping with the worst specimens of that character.

As for our own national conscience in the matter, we need not hesitate to say that it is clear. The reasonable voice of Christianity has said—"If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men" (Romans xii. 18); and that had been the consistent aim of our foreign policy in Europe. But to what ablebodied man would it be possible, unless he were a despicable coward, any longer to be at peace with the villain who suddenly revealed that all the while he had been professing a peaceable spirit he had been storing formidable weapons and infernal machines with the intent at the moment of readiness and opportunity to take him and his family by surprise and to spoil them with violence; to what ablebodied Christian worthy of the name would it be possible to witness the same iniquity committed against his neighbour without standing by his side to defend him or flying to his deliverance from afar?

There is no pronouncement upon international war or peace in the Gospel; yet it is correct appreciation of the new Commandment of our Lord to love our brethren as he loved them, and our neighbour as ourself, and even to love our enemy, that enables us to recognise the fitness of associating the fine prophetic pictures of the days of peace with the Advent of the Christ, and to call him the Prince of Peace; for that commandment of his shows us that he shall indeed teach peace unto the nations—those that will learn of him in truth. In the meantime, so long as there remain violent men among us, or violent nations in Christendom, it will remain the right and duty of Christians to be armed and on the watch for self-defence.

Some people have been saying that the world is in sad need of another Saviour, and a few profess to be in full expectation of his advent. That here and there good and gifted men will arise to uplift their fellows from sin and woe towards holiness and joy, who does not expect, or who can doubt? But that any greater than the Christ shall come, or indeed that any saviour apart from him shall arise—it is impossible. Or has not he shown us the Father, and therein shown us too, the whole relationship and all the duty of mankind to God? What more could any show? Therefore, if there be peoples that still imagine a vain thing, and though there are still kings of the

earth who set themselves against the Lord, and against his Christ, saying—" " Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," fear not, daughter of Zion: for thy King indeed cometh; for God has set him on his holy hill; and many peoples shall yet go up to the mountain of the Lord that he may teach them of his ways. And let all Christians pray—and let them all believe—that in God's time all nations shall serve righteousness and peace.

ALL SOULS' FESTIVAL.

EDWARD BUNTING, Esq.,
author of "The General Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland." First organist of the 2nd Congregation (All Souls) 1806-1817.

All Souls' Church has been busy of late with the inauguration of the All Souls' Festival, which is a new feature in the Church's life, and which it is hoped will be an annual event. "The fundamental meaning of the Festival" —to quote the circular—"is to be found in the sublime religious conviction that our beloved dead are still in intimate communion with the living, and that as a "choir invisible they are completing their eternal destiny and confirming their immortal bliss by helping on the work of those on earth, whose minds, through the enlivening influence of noble ideals and devoted service, are fixed on the perfecting of our humanity, so that it may be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect." This principle was especially emphasized by the members and friends of the Church each choosing some hero, saint, and martyr, and adopting an ideal suggested by their choice, which they will endeavour, with God's help, to live up to during the coming year.

The Festival opened on Saturday, 23rd October, with a most interesting revival of the miscellaneous programme of sacred music which formed the first day's proceedings of a festival arranged in October, 1813, in the old church of the Second Congregation, by Edward Bunting, the famous collector of Irish music, the first organist of the church. This revival was due to the initiative of the present organist, Mr. Teasdale Griffiths, A.R.C.O., who got together for the occasion a choir and orchestra, numbering eighty in all. There was an excellent attendance, and the programme was most admirably rendered, the solo parts being taken by the regular members of the choir. The newspaper reports were most complimentary and encouraging, as can be seen from the following extract from "The Northern Whig"—"The singing of the different choruses allotted to the choir lacked little in balance or tone. They made an inspiring commencement with 'He gave them Hailstones' (Israel in Egypt), and the general effect of the other choruses was such as to reflect great credit on the conductor, whose task was most arduous. The purity of Madame Hampton's voice was very noticeable in the rendering of the beautiful solo, 'Angels ever bright' (Theodora). She also interpreted the air, "The Bright Seraphim" (Samson), with singular grace and dignity. In the recitative, 'O Loss of Light' (Samson), and in the air, 'Lord, what is Man?' (Semele) Mr. R. M. Kent imparted the eloquence of the music to the words. In the trio, 'Disdainful of Danger' (Judas Maccabeus), Miss

Winnie Woods, Mr. Kent, and Mr. E. V. Core sang with marked freedom and freshness. The orchestra was always sympathetic, and one of the best things on the programme was the overture to 'Saul.' Lovers of the violin found much pleasure in listening to the 'Concerto' (by Viotti), which was given with spirit and verve, Mr. Fred Clarke leading." The musical part of the festival was resumed on Sunday evening (24th October), when Haydn's "Creation" was given, this being the second day's proceedings of Mr. Bunting's festival. Despite the most inclement weather, the church was well filled. To quote again "The Northern Whig"—"The choir sang the choruses with feeling, earnestness, and understanding, and the overture was well balanced. The tone was good throughout, close attention was paid to the beat of the conductor, and all the surroundings helped in the general effect. A word of praise should be given to Mr. Griffiths, the conductor, who had spared neither time or trouble in his determination to make the rendering as perfect as possible The oratorio was given after evening prayer, and an appropriate address by the minister, based on Romans viii. 28." A word of praise and gratitude is also due to the whole choir, and, above all, to those friends who by so generously giving their services made the event a real success.

On Sunday morning (24th October) the Rev. E. H. Pickering preached the inaugural sermon from the words—"Things new and old" (Matthew xviii. 52). He pointed out that, although the sort of backward-looking attitude, as expressed in Lot's wife, where there was nothing but vain regrets, was essentially bad, yet, in looking backward, as they were doing in that festival, they were but giving expression to their Christian hopefulness. They looked back, not because they despaired of the future, but because they wished to enrich the future with all that was good in the past. Having referred to the Church's distinguished past, he said that perhaps its present comparative insignificance was due to the fact that great as their forefathers were, they were not fully conscious of all that their religious principles demanded. He said, "If, then, it should prove to be that our predecessors were not always unflinchingly loyal to the principle of religious liberty, and that they had not always the vision of heavenly things before them, we shall have learned something to give us new hope. We shall be able to look back with admiration on the good work done, and, knowing that the qualities which inspired it were the same as those which inspire us to-day, to endeavour to keep on doing good work; but, knowing better the meaning of these qualities, we ought to be able to do it better—although in trying to do better we are bound to find success harder, for all best things are the fruit of much labour and even of sorrow." Mr. Pickering concluded with showing the eternal inspiration to be derived from the dedication of their Church to All Souls.

On Wednesday evening (27th Oct.), at a special religious service, Dr. John Campbell gave an admirable address on "Heroes of our Faith." What he said was inspired by the last words of Sir Walter Scott to his son: "Be a good man; it all lies in that." Certainly the list of names he gave of men who from the earliest Christian times to the present day have been inspired with the ideal of a free religion, with its teaching that life is more than belief, character than creed, showed clearly its invigorating moral influence. From the very first, the adherents to our faith, whether called by our name or not, have been men of active public spirit and sterling moral character. It is impossible in a brief report to do justice to the erudition displayed and the number of interesting details brought to our notice, but the concluding words of the lecture should be noted—"Men were beginning to recognise that much of the degradation, suffering, and disease which afflicted humanity was due to bad conduct, and was therefore preventible. When that fact became generally understood by the people there was good reason to believe that the Churches would adopt

as their test of a man, not his belief in that creed or confession, but his resolve to make the words of Jesus his guide through life.

A thoroughly interesting and important event was the lantern lecture on "The Second Congregation as a factor in the civic progress of Belfast," delivered by Mr. Shannon Millin, B.A., B.L., in Rosemary Hall, on Friday evening, 29th October, to a large and representative audience. The lecture was so full of good things that it can scarcely be summarized. It showed how significant and vital a part was played by the members of the Second Congregation in building up the industry, commerce, education, philanthropy, etc., of Belfast. Wm. Ritchie, the first shipbuilder, was a member of that Congregation. Other members played a leading part in the foundation of the Belfast Bank, the Linen Hall Library, the Literary Society, the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, etc. With reference to the last-named, the lecturer showed that in the history of the Institution recently published scant justice was done to one of the Church's ministers, Dr. William Hamilton Drummond, who was undoubtedly a pioneer in Belfast education. Professor J. A. Lindsay, M.A., M.D., took the chair, and made a most kindly speech. Other speeches were made by Rev. R. D. Seaver on the Belfast Literary Society, Sir Charles Brett on "Music in Belfast," Mr. Henry Riddell on the Old Mutual Improvement Society, Mr. J. W. Kempster, D.L., on Shipbuilding, and Mr. John Sinclair on the Belfast Harbour Board. The proceedings concluded with the customary votes of thanks. Reference must be made to the excellent and unique set of slides which Mr. Millin had generously got together at his own expense.

Sunday (31st October) saw the Festival continued with "The Day of Heroes, Saints, and Martyrs," and the proceedings were brought to a fitting conclusion on Tuesday, 2nd November —All Souls Day—with a memorial service for Nurse Cavell and the soldiers and sailors fallen in the war.

SCENES IN THE WAR ZONE.

LECTURE BY MISS J. V. BATES.

At a meeting held on 5th November, in the Central Hall, under the auspices of the Unity Guild, a very interesting lecture, entitled "In the War Zone," was delivered by Miss J. V. Bates.

The lecturer, who was very cordially received, gave a simple and straightforward account of her experiences in France. She said she had lived in that country for a period of four years before the war, and the thing which struck her most on re-visiting it recently was the absolute calm which prevailed there. Paris was as cold and serious now as once she was gay and light-hearted, and the war had shown that under the proverbial frivolity of the French there was a deep, resolute nature. Paris was rather darker now at night than formerly, the streets were very quiet, and there were no taxi-cabs to be seen. But it was the calmness of the people that amazed her above all things. We in this country did not know what real mobilisation meant. In France every fit man of military age was serving his country. A mobilisation such as that would cause some stoppage of business here, and, of course, it did so in France. But behind the men of France were the French women. It was marvellous how when the men went to the war the women of France took over the control of affairs at home. The theatres, music halls, cafes, and other places of amusement were closed early in the evening now, but the people felt themselves to be better off without them. The French Government had need of every single soul in France to-day. There was no need for anyone to starve. If the dressmakers were losing their work there was room for them where the men's clothes were being made; women were working in the railway stations, minding the shops, the telegraph, the telephone, the trams—all the women seemed to be working for their country. And they had no pity for the male slacker in plain clothes unless he wore the badge of the medically unfit. The same spirit of quiet and calm mani-

fested itself to an amazing degree, she was told, even when the Germans were within twenty-nine miles of Paris, and when the roar of the guns could be heard in the boulevards. At midnight on the night before the tide of invasion began to recede there was a great meeting of workpeople near the Louvre, and they solemnly swore that before the Huns should capture Paris they would burn the city to the ground. France would do everything to win this war. Miss Bates proceeded to describe the state of the territory through which the Germans had passed and which was now again in the occupation of the French. Photographic views were projected on to a screen depicting the state of the roads, the towns, the railways. Thousands of broken-down motor cars lined the hedges of the main roads, the towns were wholly destroyed, while the railway bridges, buildings, and the track itself were demolished. The lecturer said she could not have conceived such devastation if she had not seen it with her own eyes. In one market-place there was an iron cross around which the French soldiers had placed a little wooden paling. Five girls had been crucified at that cross by the Germans. The atrocities of which the people of this country had read were not half as bad as the facts could show. Desolate crowds still poured into the towns from the fighting zone, the old men of seventy, who could not serve in the trenches, had turned out in their old uniforms, and were guarding the bridges The Germans in their advance through France had destroyed everything in the houses they occupied, and purposely left the broken contents of the rooms in such a filthy condition that they could never be made fit to use again. Miss Bates, proceeding, spoke of the escape of a lady and her daughter from the Germans at their country house near Lille. The enemy swept over the country unexpectedly and entered the house at night. They murdered the woman's husband before her eyes, and she, to save her daughter, pretended not to care, and gave the brutal assassins as much cognac as they could drink. When they were so drunk that they were unable to move, she and her daughter made their way to the French lines, carrying with them their jewellery, which was all they now possessed in the world. The most popular postcard in France to-day was that of Marguerite, a girl of twenty-five—the "Nurse Cavell" of France—who in the early days of the war, when the French retired, volunteered to stay behind in charge of a rest house containing some twenty dangerously wounded men. The Germans came, the nurse was struck down at the door of the building, and her head was ground to pulp beneath the feet of her assailants. The lecturer also described a conversation she had had with a French infantryman, a native of Douai, who before the war was a market gardener in a fair way of business, and had a wife and three children. He told her that his two elder children were shot because, when the Germans came, they were found playing at soldiers, the baby was bayoneted, the mother had become incurably insane. Miss Bates proceeded to describe the great need for supplies of all kinds for the village hospitals in France behind the zone of the armies, and spoke of some of the difficulties which had been encountered in the work of healing, and which were gradually being overcome. The French she said, resented the way in which English people sometimes referred to their system of "compulsory service." They had known for a long time past that universal service was necessary for the good of their country, and for many years they had voted at elections freely and gladly for those Ministers who advocated such service. The women of France were convinced that every man who could fight should fight at this time. Just as one man would be ashamed to be fed and clothed by another man, so he ought to be ashamed to stay at home while another man fought and died for him. Every man should be prepared to go out and defend his home, his wife, and his children. If he did not defend them he had no right to them. That was what the people of France said to-day

And they were right. Miss Bates, in conclusion, spoke of the situation in Bosnia at the time of the outbreak of the war, and of the sad state of affairs among the peasantry in Poland, where, she said, her sister had been living for nine months after hostilities opened.

On the motion of the Chairman, a vote of thanks to the lecturer was very heartily carried.

SUPPORT THE "NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN"

By Ullin.

The time will soon be here for making New Year resolutions. This has been considered equivalent to making paving-stones for "a city much like London," where the climate is lower than at Bagdad. But only those thought-forms which do not ripen to action fall dead as stones. The resolution once made, let its fulfilment start at once, so that no force be lost! Foremost in the order of duties stands that to religion. This first, and all else will follow: home, country, business, friends. Religion is the eternal rock to build our earthly life upon, expediency is a treacherous foundation of sand. Religion is the life of every other concern of human interest. It meets us at the cradle in baptism, it consecrates the marriage bond, and at the end opens the door to fuller life beyond with the word of hope and cheer. Many Churches are modelled on an ancient form suggestive of the meaning of religion—at the door the font, midway the lectern holding the book, symbolic of instruction, and finally, the Holy Table.

Love for one's own religion is fed by pondering on the meaning of our community being a small one. There is no disgrace in a regiment returning from where the fire has been the hottest as a mere handful. We have not courted the world, we have not toadied and compromised to win popular favour by "bowing the knee to Baal," by repeating a form of words which had not the consent of our hearts and consciences, by any sophistry of "mental reservation," but gaily the old blue Presbyterian banner has unfurled itself on the breeze from our ramparts, displaying to the world the emblazonment—"Non-Subscribing," the echo of the old Protestant battle-cry of Ulster—"No Surrender."

People in "a noble cause contending" do not think what they can get out of it for themselves, but what they can give, and if "Non-Subscribing Presbyterianism" be worthy of unflinching sacrifice in the way of time, money, and work, and as the past has shown, even life and liberty, surely then this little Magazine,' 'The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian," as a potent factor, in the service of the Church from which it takes its name, is worthy of very special consideration and support.

In the first place, it is not run for profit. Those who attend the Church meetings in Belfast know that the income from the sale of it does not by any means pay for its expenses. But without a word of demur, friends who believe in the principles for which it stands, who believe in the Church, whose claims it advocates—the only organised Non-Subscribing Church in the whole world, make up the deficit, and are glad to do so.

In the second place, it is our own paper. There are Unitarian and Liberal Christian papers, larger in size, with more reading matter in them, which have a wider circulation, and which even encroach on the province of this Magazine. But this is peculiarly our own paper. In the main, its contributors are from our own ranks. Its items of news, coming in from solitary outposts often, in themselves help to keep the little flame of enthusiasm alive, and we should miss sadly now the little paragraphs concerning our friends and neighbours.

In the third place, if the quantity is small the quality is good. The paper it is printed on is a thing to be proud of. An old woman who values papers—religious and secular alike—only for their worth as material for kindling the fire, might say—"'Deed it's that sma', it's no worth a penny." But friend

it's not designed for kindling the fire on your hearth, but in your heart. And, if you find it small, read every word of it two or three times over, and you'll wonder how one small paper can hold so much.

So, when on the Saturday night, when you're making everything ready for the morrow, and you open your purse and say—" Now, how much can I put into the plate, the morn ? " If it's near the end of the month, dinna forget the wee paper, and think of the friend far away, and buy an extra copy for him, and it's wonderful what a penny can do.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE DANCE.

" A pity beyond all telling
Is hid in the heart of love."
—*W. B. Yeats.*

It was Christmas Eve, but in the warm moist wind that blew across the bay and against the white-walled cottage there was no breath of winter. A few leaves still clung to the fuchsia bushes in the little garden that divided the cottage from the road. The half-door opened and a girl's figure appeared outlined against the red glow of the turf fire within. The first stars were showing above the sharp outlines of the hills that guarded the bay ; across the road was the dim shining of the water, and in the air the sound of the waves rolling in along the Antrim coast.

"I wondher will he see me home afther the dancin'," the girl was thinking. " Anyway, he has me promised for ' The Waves of Tory.' Och, dear, but this has been the quare long day ! But they'll be fetchin' me soon now."

From the house came a querulous old man's voice. " Mary," it said, " come in out o' that wi' ye. There's a dhraught wud blow the horns out o' an ox."

Mary went in obediently. The old man sat by the hearth drawing feebly at a much-blackened clay pipe, his wrinkled clean-shaven face red in the turf-glow.

" I heerd Hugh O'Neill an' his fiddle go by a wee bit ago," he said. " They'll be dancin' up at M'Laughlin's the night ? "

" Ay, granda."

" Many's the time I seen meself an' yer granny stan' up. She was the quare fine dancer when she was a lump of a girl. Boys Oh ! them was the times. Chrissemasses now bees nothin' to them."

He fell silent, gazing into the fire.

" Will I make ye a cup o' tea, granda, afore I go out ? It'll hearten ye up," said the girl.

" I'm not carin' for't," he said dismally. " Is James for goin' too ? "

" He is ; he's out in the byre."

He leaned over the blaze.

" It's quare an' could," he said presently as the door opened and a boy appeared carrying a bucket.

" Och, blathers ! " replied the boy ; " sure ye can har'ly get breathin' in here for the heat. . . . Can't ye lave the dure alone, Mary ? " as she went to shut it.

" Och, sure, he's ould," she whispered, " an' ye'll be out of it in a minute."

Her eyes were shining and full of dreams.

" Yer granny was here last Chrissemas," said the old man. " It's lonesome got, an' yez all for yer pleasurin'. A pipe's poor company, so it is. I wisht I was away out o' this for good an' all."

" Ye'd best go till yer bed," said the boy, kicking the turf on the hearth. " Ye'll not be thinkin' long when ye're asleep."

" I do be always thinkin' long. I be mindin' the ould things, an' it kapes me wakin'. Many's the time I think I hear yer granny callin' me. Ochanee, an' her ten months in her grave ! But I'll no be long afther her."

" Och, talk sense ! " said the boy roughly, but with a kindlier glance. " Sure ye're hale and hearty yet." He stretched himself. " Well, I'm away to put on me, Mary. They'll not be long now."

Mary put another turf on the fire, and took a candle into the little back room that was hers. As she dresses it was not her own image that she saw in the cracked green glass, but a brown

manly face, merry-eyed, and young. Already her hand was touching his in the dance, their eyes were meeting. . .

When she came back into the kitchen the old man was sitting with his head in his hands, a picture of weary old age. She thought of another man, now young and lusty, whose brown head might one day be thus grey and bent and lonely, she in her grave and he thinking long for the dancing and gaiety of youth, and the thought stung. She stood silent for a moment or two; then she was roused by the sound of gay voices singing on the road. There was a knock at the door, and a voice called,

"Are yez ready, Mary an' James? Be quick with ye."

"Ay, we're ready," shouted James, clattering down the wooden ladder that led to his attic above the kitchen. "Come on, Mary."

"I'm not goin'," said she. "I've took a notion to stay at home, so ye needn't ask me."

James stared.

"Are ye afther fightin' with Hugh?" he asked. "I hear he's very great with Sarah M'Naught."

"Ye're just wrong, then," she replied in a voice that trembled on the edge of tears. Then she added more firmly, "Away, James, an' don't be kapin' them waitin'."

She went back into her room till the voices and exclamations had died away. There were tears in her eyes, and her lips trembled.

"It's not thrue what he says? asked the old man when she came back into the kitchen. "Ye'd be the quare fule till quarrel with Hugh, for he's a right dacent boy, so he is."

"Hugh's all right, granda, but I'm not for dancin' the night. I don't know rightly what took me not to go. You an' me'll have a dhrop o' tea at home."

She made the tea, and they drank it in the dusky glow. She did her best to listen to his stories, but the thought of Sarah M'Naught in her new grey dress lay heavy at her heart, and every now and then the tears burned her eyelids. The old man was tired, and went early to bed, but she sat on by the dying fire. Then suddenly she put her head down on the settle and sobbed.

"James might as well have stayed as me," she thought bitterly, for the first time dimly recognising her woman's lot of self-sacrifice. "He's no great han' at the dancin' anyway, an' he cud ha' come up later when granda was asleep.'

The soft wind blew round the house and murmured in the chimney. Suddenly the girl lifted her head and listened, for borne on its wings there came the wail of a fiddle. For a moment she was frightened.

"It'll be the wee folk off Tiveragh," she thought with a shiver, and indeed the distant notes might well have been the skirl of fairy pipes, now louder, now lower, as the sound was carried by the fitful wind. It came nearer and nearer. Surely, surely, it was "Aileen Aroon." Her heart beat suffocatingly in her throat.

At the door the music died away, and a voice called softly "Mary!" She opened.

"Och, Hugh! och, Hugh!" she cried, and could say no more.

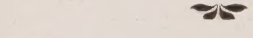
"Why didn't ye come, Mary?" asked the voice. "Sure ye promised me."

"I was feared to lave granda. He bees lonesome these days, an' . . . Och, Hugh, I just took a notion it might maybe be yerself sittin' like that some Chrissemass yer lone by the fire, an' you an old man."

He took her in his arms.

"It's the quare fulish thoughts ye have, Mary," he whispered.

R. D.



"The adversary again applauds, and waits the hour. When they have branched themselves out, saith he, small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time. Fool! he sees not the firm root, out of which we all grow, though into branches; nor will beware until he see our small divided maniples cutting through at every angle of his ill-united and unwieldy brigade."—*Milton.*

Killed in Action.

"I will give you a crown of life."

PRIVATE W. J. OSBORNE.

William John Osborne, son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Edens Osborne, Holywood, was killed in action somewhere in France on 8th October last while serving as a private in the Canadian contingent. He was twenty-one years of age. For over five years he had been living in Canada, but soon after the outbreak of war he answered the call of the Empire. During his training in England he was able to pay a brief visit to his parents. He was only a short time at the front before he lost his life as a result of a mine explosion in the trenches. He is remembered in Holywood as a bright, good-natured, and promising Sunday School scholar, and by his comrades and by all who knew him he is sincerely and deeply regretted. Heartfelt sympathy will go out to his parents in their great sacrifice. May they find consolation in the thought that their son was brave and faithful unto death, and that now he has obtained a crown of life.

Reports.

Notice to Ministers and Members of our Churches.—Many of our young men who, prior to the outbreak of war, worshipped with us on Sundays and in various ways took part in our religious life, are now on active service fighting the common enemy of mankind. Bravely they answered the call of King and Country; as bravely they fight for us and offer themselves that we may live. We give them our prayers; we would do them all the honour that lies in our power. And so the Editor earnestly requests all ministers and members of our Churches who follow the careers of these heroes to keep him supplied with all news touching the soldiers of our household of faith. With us there is no question of rank. We know only one rank—the rank of brave men. We would do them honour.

* *

Roll of Honour.—It is suggested that with the New Year's issue a complete Roll of Honour should be published. To enable this to be done, will friends kindly intimate to Rev. G. J. Slipper, Newry, the names of young men who have enlisted since the last Roll; also those of young women who are giving their services as nurses or in any capacity on behalf of our soldiers. Such names should be sent not later than December 15th.

* *

Unity Guild.—The attendance at Miss Bates' lecture on the 5th November was almost as large as at the Opening Night. In the regretted absence of the President, through indisposition, the Rev. H. J. Rossington took the chair. Prior to the lecture songs in French and English were rendered by Miss Graham and Miss Leslie. The lecture was illustrated by lime-light views, and showed the terrible state of devastation to which parts of France have been reduced by the war. The lecturer told some harrowing stories of what she had actually seen of the condition of the wounded. A collection in aid of the French Wounded Emergency Fund, amounting to over £5, was taken up during the evening. It is a pity that there was not a more generous response for such a deserving object. A full report of the lecture appears elsewhere in our columns.

The Anonymous Papers Night proved much more attractive than had been anticipated by some. Of course it was not to be expected that there would be so large an attendance as there had been at the two previous gatherings. But all present—to the number of about 50—seemed to enjoy the hour occupied by the Hon. Secretary in reading the papers. In all one dozen papers had been handed in, and it was decided by the vote of the audience

that the best one was that contributed by Miss I. Campbell, B.A., and that the paper containing the best suggestion had been written by the Secretary himself. It is matter for speculation whether the Book Tea, which followed, would fall under the condemnation of one of the writers as being a "brainy" competition. Anyhow, it certainly was a popular feature, no less than 45 persons wearing badges representing titles of books. Rev. G. L. Phelps carried off the prize, having succeeded in guessing 16 correctly. At the next meeting, which will be held in the Rosemary Hall on 15th December, there will be a lantern lecture by the President on "How Italy became a Nation." It should prove very attractive.

* *

Ballyclare.—On Sunday, 24th Oct., we held our Annual Harvest Thanksgiving Service. There were the usual kind gifts of fruit, flowers, and produce tastefully arranged by the young ladies of the congregation. The Rev. S. E. Bowen came over from Crumlin, and preached a helpful and appropriate sermon. Considering that it rained steadily the whole day, the congregation was an exceedingly good one. The singing by an augmented choir was splendid—not surpassed on any previous occasion, our own organist, Miss Ethel Dougan, rendering her portion of the service with her usual feeling and expression. The collection was also good, enabling us to send a substantial sum to the Soldiers' and Sailors' Help Committee

Last month our congregation sustained a very serious loss in the passing away of Mr. Charles Paisley. Our deep sympathies go out to his sorrowing wife, family, and relatives. He was a life-long member of our congregation, and took an active interest in the Church's welfare to the very end. In his will he arranged that his stipend should be paid in perpetuity from the estate.

* *

Belfast : First Congregation.—A series of six monthly entertainments is being carried out here in aid of St. Dunstan's Hostel for soldiers blinded in the war. Originally it was thought that if £30 were handed to the Hostel as a result of the completed effort our people would have done very well for this particular object. However, the first of the series, which was held on October 27th, realised that amount by itself. It took the form of a Social Concert, and if all those who had so generously bought tickets had attended the organisers would not have known where to find room for them. The second entertainment was an Auction Bridge Drive, and took place in the afternoon of 17th November. About 200 persons were present, including those who only came in for tea. Altogether, over £90 was raised, which, of course, includes several very generous subscriptions. A Variety Sale will be the next of the series. It will be held on the 15th December, and will also be in the afternoon. All this only represents a part of the work which is being done by this congregation to alleviate the suffering caused by the war.

* *

Cairncastle.—A very large congregation met in the Old Meeting House, Cairncastle, on October 3rd, at 3-30 o'clock, to hold a Harvest Thanksgiving Service. Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., of Belfast, was the preacher, and his stirring sermon was much appreciated by all. The Choir, under the leadership of Mrs. James C. Tweed, Ballymullock, gave special music—an anthem, "Thou Visitest the Earth," by Rev. E. Vine Hall, and a harvest carol, "We Thy faithfulness Adore," by Caleb Simper, and it led the harvest hymns. Several members of the neighbouring Churches helped in the Choir and our faithful Larne friends. The church was beautifully decorated with fruit, flowers, corn, golden ivy, and vegetables, and never looked better. The branches of red Siberian crab apples—all the way from Ballyclare, and of purple damsons from nearer home, were much admired. The collection amounted to £4 17s. 7d., towards oiling the manse.

* *

Larne and Kilwaughter. — Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in the

Meeting House of this congregation on Sunday, 24th October. The sacred edifice was not decorated, but splendid specimens of wheat, flowers, etc., tastefully arranged on the communion table and in the vestibule, appropriately suggested the bounty and the grace of the Creator. The weather being very inclement, the morning attendance was, with the exception of a very faithful few from the country, limited to town residents who, weather notwithstanding and in remembrance of collections in aid of Larne Sick Nursing Society, gathered in numbers as honourable to themselves as gratifying to the Minister. There was a large congregation in the evening, including many neighbours of other denominations. As so few members of the congregation from country districts could attend owing to the weather, the morning service, with sermon and collection, were repeated with gratifying results on Sunday, 7th November. The musical portions of the service, chant, hymn, anthem, etc., under the skilful direction of the organist, Mr. E. Holmes, were rendered with tuneful sweetness, especially the bright little anthem, "Daughter of Zion," from the Cantata, "The Prince of Peace," which was given with great verve and beauty of expression and feeling. Needless to say, Mr. Holmes's contributions on the organ were above criticism, especially his rendering of the "Harvest Festival March," introducing the tune "Graejenberg," with variations.

* *

Mountpottinger.—The Annual Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on Sunday, the 24th October, when the services were conducted by the Rev. M. Watkins, the recently appointed minister. Notwithstanding the very wet character of the day, good congregations assembled to take part in the services and incidentally to admire the tasteful manner in which the church had been decorated by a committee of ladies, acting under the directions of Miss M. Davidson and Rev. M. Watkins. The service in the evening was largely of a musical nature, and much credit is due to the organist, Miss M. Morrow, L.I.S.M., who had augmented the choir for the occasion. In addition to the well-known hymns used at such services, anthems were suitably rendered and solos were contributed by Misses Molyneaux, Chiplin, and Moore, also Messrs. Reid and MacCormic. In addition to these friends who so kindly assisted, a surprise awaited the congregation, when the Rev. M. Watkins came forward and rendered a solo in excellent style.

* *

Newry.—Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on Sunday, October 24th, and continued on the following Monday evening. The church was tastefully decorated with corn, flowers, and fruit, and, despite the very inclement weather, large congregations assembled at all the services. The preacher on Sunday at both services was the Rev. Alfred Davison, of Dromore, whose discourses were most appropriate and much appreciated. On Monday evening the Rev. H. J. Rossington conducted the service, and his visit brought many friends from neighbouring Churches. A special feature of the festival was the music rendered by the Choir, augmented by friends and under the direction of Mrs. Slipper. The anthems, "Ye shall dwell in the land" (Stainer) and "Seek ye the Lord" (Varley Roberts), were sung, the solo parts in each being taken by Miss Masson and Mr. J. Blair. The collections at each service were very satisfactory, and showed an increase on previous years.

On the Tuesday evening a lecture was given by Mr. Rossington on "Belgium," illustrated with limelight views. There was an excellent audience, and all enjoyed the interesting and graphic description of the various places of interest which have loomed so largely in the devastating war in which our Empire and the Allies are engaged. Mr. Andrew Thompson had charge of the lantern, and at the close a hearty vote of thanks was extended to Mr. Rossington, on the motion of Mr. Walter Scott, seconded by Mr. R. J. M'Combe. The proceeds of a collection taken on the occasion are being devoted to the purchase of material for making com-

forts for the soldiers and sailors. The ladies of the Young People's Guild are very busy with knitting and sewing, and parcels are being despatched at the end of the month (November) to our young men serving at the front.

* *

The Sunday School Committee offer two prizes, value 10s. each (one to a boy and one to a girl) for the best essay on ONE of the following subjects :—

1. The origin of Non-Subscription.
2. Why I am a Non-Subscribing Presbyterian ?
3. "The Kingdom of God is within you." How does this express the spirit of the teaching of Jesus ?
4. The practical teaching of Jesus on prayer.

CONDITIONS. — Only Sunday School scholars are eligible to compete. The essayist's proper name, or the name of the school to which he or she belongs, must not be given, but the essays should be marked with a number or an assumed name.

The Committee reserve the right of withholding the whole or part of a prize should they consider that the best essay sent in does not merit it.

The essays should reach me not later than 31st December, 1915.

S. E. BOWEN, Convener.

* *

Templepatrick.—Harvest Thanksgiving Service was held here on Sunday evening, 24th October. The Meeting House was suitably decorated for the occasion by a number of willing workers who assembled for that purpose on the previous evening. Unfortunately, owing to an extremely wet day, the attendance was not so good as we are accustomed to ; judging by the number of coins in the offertory, we should say that there were 250 present, which is a very much smaller congregation than we always have at our special service. The rain poured during the whole day without ceasing, and therein lies the explanation. The Rev. J. A. Kelly, Moderator, conducted the service, and preached the sermon ; and Miss May Dickson, of Belfast, sang "Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets" and "I will sing of thy great mercies," both pieces from Mendelssohn's St. Paul, Miss Getty presiding at the organ.

On Thursday evening, 18th ult., a social gathering of members of the Church and scholars of the Sunday School was held in the Roughfort School. All took tea together at 7-30 o'clock. After tea, the chair was occupied by the minister, Rev. A. Turner. Mr. Harry Barnett opened the proceedings with a violin solo, accompanied by Miss Barnett. Miss Susie Birkmyre and Messrs. Campbell and Brown rendered very pleasingly the vocal items, and Miss May Ritchie recited. During the proceedings those scholars of the Sunday School who had attained the requisite number of attendances received their prizes. Attention was called to Mrs. Campbell's forthcoming "White Elephant" Sale at Castle Upton on 11th December, at 3 o'clock, in aid of soldiers, sailors, and mine-sweepers. The matter was taken up very earnestly, and many helpers were got that evening to help in the good work. The congregation also decided to send a special Christmas parcel to each of its boys on active service, and a very spirited competition took place to supply the necessary articles for those parcels. The articles are all to be delivered at the Manse on 15th December, and the parcels will be posted same evening. For some time past a large number of ladies of the congregation have been engaged knitting comforts for the soldiers. These were given in at this meeting, and a very large parcel is about to be forwarded to the 14th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles. A most successful evening was concluded with the National Anthem and the benediction.

"Don't cross the bridge, till you come to it,
Is a proverb old, and of excellent wit."

Death.

M'CLEMENT — On Thursday, November 18th, 1915, at Ballyhemlin, Co. Down, Margaret M'Clement, aged 73. A lifelong member of the Ballyhemlin congregation.

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